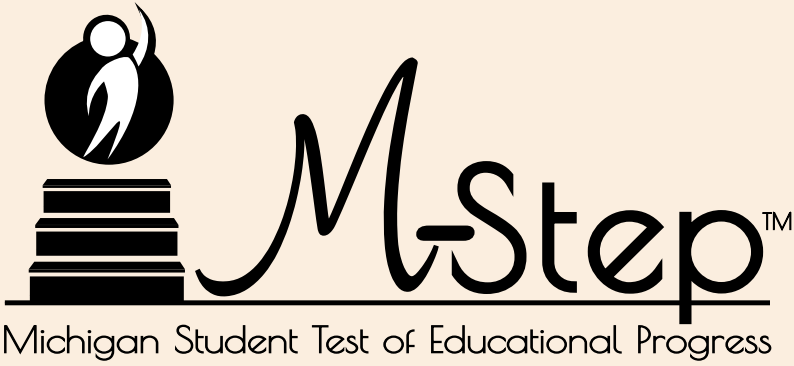


Student Name _____



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Sample Items

Grade

8

Form

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ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS
SPRING 2015

MICHIGAN STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
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The sample items included in this set can be used by students and teachers to become familiar with the kinds of items students will encounter on the paper/pencil summative assessments. The sample items demonstrate the rigor of Michigan's academic content standards. They are not to be interpreted as indicative of the focus of the M-STEP assessments; they are simply a collection of item samples. Every standard is not included in this sample set.

Read the text and answer questions 1 through 8.

Ansel Adams, Painting with Light

by Melanie G. Snyder

Ansel Adams is one of the most celebrated photographers in history. His interest in photography began when he was twelve and saw images of the gardener outside his window projected onto his ceiling. His father explained that the effect was known as “camera obscura.” Similar to the processes of a camera, the sunlight cast the gardener’s image through a gap in the window shade and into the darkened room. Mr. Adams used his own camera to show Ansel how light is reflected through a lens and into a darkened compartment, where the image is burned onto film. Shortly after that, father and son went to the Panama-Pacific International Exposition, an event filled with art, music, and science exhibits. Ansel spent much of his time looking at the paintings, studying how artists used light and shadow in their work. The seeds for his love of photography were planted.

On 1 June 1916, Ansel was allowed to indulge his passion for nature when he and his parents boarded a train bound for Yosemite National Park. When they arrived, Ansel’s parents gave him a gift—a simple Kodak Box Brownie camera. Ansel scanned the instructions, asked his father for a few pointers, then clambered off on the first of many hikes around Yosemite to photograph the breathtaking mountains, waterfalls, and meadows. He took over thirty photographs on that first trip to Yosemite. But when he returned home and had those photos developed, he wasn’t happy with the way most of them turned out.

But Ansel didn’t let that discourage him. He took more photographs, then went to visit a man named Frank Dittman who owned a film-developing business. Ansel asked Dittman whether he could work in the shop without pay, just to learn more about photography. Dittman agreed and took Ansel and his latest rolls of film into the lab to show him how to develop film into prints.

Ansel soon saw the relationship between the way a photo was taken and the final print. He decided that in order to become a better photographer, he needed to practice. He made up a set of work sheets on which he could write down every decision he made when taking a photograph—the type of film he’d used, how it was loaded in the camera, which lens and filters he’d used, and all of the camera settings. He also took notes on the amount of light available when he took each photo. Was it cloudy? Sunny? Were there shadows? Was it morning, mid-day, or evening when the photo was taken?

When he developed his film, he compared the quality of the final prints with the settings he’d used when taking the photographs. This helped him to improve with every photo he took, and he read every book and magazine he could find to learn more.

Ansel soon had plenty of opportunities to practice his photography. Starting when he was eighteen, he spent four summers in Yosemite National Park as a custodian

for the Sierra Club headquarters. He led hiking expeditions through Yosemite and captured spectacular photographs with each hike.

He created his photos carefully, as though they were paintings like those seen at the Expo. Early in the twentieth century, photography was not considered creative art, but Ansel hoped to change that. He'd seen how the use of light and shade in paintings could bring them to life, and he wanted to use his camera to paint with light. He visualized the story he wanted to tell with each photo. "The picture we make is never made for us alone," he said later. "It is, and should be, a communication—to reach as many people as possible." Photographs, he felt, could create the same strong feelings the paintings at the Expo had aroused in him.

Ansel would decide carefully on the subject of each photograph he took, then choose the angle from which to take it, sometimes hiking for miles to find the best vantage point. He studied the movement of sun and clouds, often waiting hours for the perfect light with which to "paint" his photograph. Then, as he developed the film into prints, he found that he could bring his own paintings to life.

"When I first made snapshots in and around Yosemite," he said, "I was casually making a visual diary—recording where I had been and what I had seen—and becoming intimate with the spirit of wild places. Gradually my photographs began to mean something in themselves; they became records of experiences as well as of places. People responded to them and my interest in the creative potential of photography grew."

Indeed, people did respond to Ansel's photos. His pictures of the wilderness, of people, and of the tiniest details of everyday life captured people's imaginations. Some of his photographs were used to convince the U.S. Congress to establish a new national park at Kings Canyon, California, and during World War II, he photographed a Japanese-American internment camp called Manzanar. He published these pictures in a book called *Born Free and Equal* to draw attention to the unfair treatment of these U.S. citizens. Later, other Adams photographs were published in President Lyndon Johnson's report "A More Beautiful America." In exhibitions around the world, in magazine articles and books, Ansel's photos were inspiring people, educating them, making them smile or cry.

Ansel Adams created over forty thousand photos during his lifetime. Many of them were taken in the wilderness places he loved best. But whether he was photographing grand mountains, everyday people, or a tiny leaf curled up on the ground, his approach to photography was based on his belief in the enormous beauty of the world.

"Once completed," he said, "the photograph must speak for itself," and the stunning photos he took speak volumes.

Excerpt from "Ansel Adams: Painting with Light" by Melanie G. Snyder. Copyright © 2000 by Carus Publishing Company. Reprinted by permission of Carus Publishing Company.

1. Choose the sentence that **best** supports that Ansel Adams' approach to photography changed from a hobby to an art form.
 - A. Ansel would decide carefully on the subject of each photograph he took, then choose the angle from which to take it, sometimes hiking for miles to find the best vantage point.
 - B. He studied the movement of sun and clouds, often waiting hours for the perfect light with which to "paint" his photograph.
 - C. Then, as he developed the film into prints, he found that he could bring his own paintings to life.
 - D. "When I first made snapshots in and around Yosemite," he said, "I was casually making a visual diary—recording where I had been and what I had seen—and becoming intimate with the spirit of wild places."
 - E. Gradually my photographs began to mean something in themselves; they became records of experiences as well as of places.
 - F. "People responded to them and my interest in the creative potential of photography grew."
2. Which statement **best** summarizes the central idea of the text?
 - A. Ansel Adams volunteered at a film development company when he was young and developed a foundation for photography.
 - B. Ansel Adams captured the smallest of details in everyday life, and considered the use of light, shade, and angles before taking a photograph.
 - C. Ansel Adams approached photography with the desire to capture the experience within the setting or subjects taken, evoking a range of emotion from his viewers.
 - D. Ansel Adams put extensive thought and preparation into his photography by documenting the types of film, lens, and filters needed when photographing his subjects.
3. First, read the dictionary definition. Then, complete the task.

(n) 1. caretaker

Choose the word from the text that most closely matches the definition provided.

- A. Starting when he was eighteen, he spent four summers in Yosemite National Park as a custodian for the Sierra Club headquarters.
- B. He created his photos carefully, as though they were paintings like those seen at the Expo.
- C. Early in the twentieth century, photography was not considered creative art, but Ansel hoped to change that.
- D. Photographs, he felt, could create the same strong feelings the paintings at the Expo had aroused in him.

4. What **most likely** did the author intend by mentioning Ansel Adams' apprenticeship with Frank Dittman in paragraph 2? Support your answer with evidence from the text.
5. This question has **two** parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Part A

Which of these inferences about the author's purpose is supported by the text?

- A. She wants to reveal Ansel Adams' inspiration
- B. She wants to promote Ansel Adams' publications.
- C. She wants the reader to consider a career in photography.
- D. She wants the reader to know how Ansel Adams was raised.

Part B

Which sentence from the text **best** supports your answer in part A?

- A. "When they arrived, Ansel's parents gave him a gift—a simple Kodak Box Brownie camera."
 - B. "He made up a set of work sheets on which he could write down every decision he made when taking a photograph—the type of film he'd use and how it was loaded in the camera, which lens and filters he'd used, and all of the camera settings."
 - C. "He created his photos carefully, as though they were paintings like those seen at the Expo."
 - D. "Ansel Adams created over forty thousand photos during his lifetime."
6. This question has **two** parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Part A

Select the statement that best describes what the use of Ansel Adams' work sheets shows about his dedication to photography.

- A. The work sheets show that Adams was a very poor photographer in the beginning.
- B. The work sheets show that Adams thought photography was a science and not an art.
- C. The work sheets show that Adams gave serious consideration to the art of photography.
- D. The work sheets show that Adams believed his photographs would someday be published.

Part B

Which sentence from the text **best** supports your answer in part A?

- A. "But when he returned home and had those photos developed, he wasn't happy with the way most of them turned out."
- B. "He also took notes on the amount of light available when he took each photo."
- C. "This helped him to improve with every photo he took, and he read every book and magazine he could find to learn more."
- D. "He published these pictures in a book called *Born Free and Equal* to draw attention to the unfair treatment of these U.S. citizens. Later, other Adams photographs were published in President Lyndon Johnson's report 'A More Beautiful America.'"

7. Read the line from the text.

"The picture we make is never made for us alone," he said later. "It is, and should be, a communication—to reach as many people as possible."

What effect does the author's use of Adams' words have on the reader's understanding of Adams' work? Select **two** options.

- A. that Adams was proud about the success he would enjoy
- B. that Adams intended to share his photography with the public
- C. that Adams felt pictures are the most important way art can reach people
- D. that Adams thought about creating art as a way of speaking to the world
- E. that Adams felt strictly that art should be made for others' enjoyment rather than for oneself

8. Read the line from the text.

He studied the movement of sun and clouds, often waiting hours for the perfect light with which to "paint" his photograph.

What effect does the author create by using the words "the perfect light with which to 'paint' his photograph"?

- A. The phrase helps the reader see Adams as a painter.
- B. The phrase suggests that a photograph is the same as a painting.
- C. The phrase creates a picture of Adams capturing the best moment in which to produce art.
- D. The phrase uses language that makes the reader think photography and painting are simple.

9. A student is writing a report for English class about famous Chicago landmarks. Read a paragraph from the draft of the report and complete the task that follows.

The home of the Chicago Cubs baseball team is one of the many famous landmarks in Chicago. Fans notice Wrigley Field's one-of-a-kind feature, the ivy-covered outfield walls, as soon as they enter through the ramps of the ballpark. Phillip K. Wrigley, owner of the team, wanted to beautify the stadium during a renovation of the bleachers in 1937. He hired Bill Veeck, General Manager of the Cubs, to lead the project. Veeck arranged for Boston ivy to be grown on the walls of Wrigley Field. The lush ivy would be a soft landing spot for an outfielder catching a high fly ball. However, the brick wall standing behind the ivy is not something any ballplayer wants to hit with his head.

The student thinks the paragraph needs an ending that is more appropriate for the audience. Choose the sentence that would **best** replace the underlined sentence.

- A. Baseballs have been known to get lost in the ivy.
 - B. Bill Veeck deserves credit for the beauty of the ivy at Wrigley Field.
 - C. To this day, Wrigley is the only ballpark with an ivy-covered outfield wall.
 - D. Fans flocking to the cozy confines of Wrigley Field would love to have a piece of the vines as a souvenir.
10. A student is writing a research report about the volcanic island, Surtsey, for a class assignment. Read the paragraph from a draft of the report and answer the question that follows.

Surtsey is a volcanic island that is located off the coast of Iceland. This island is unique because it was formed by volcanic activity and only rose above the ocean's surface in the 1960s. When the island appeared, it was a barren rock with no animal or plant life. Scientists studied Surtsey because they wanted to see if and how life would develop on there. The first signs of life on the island were the results of seeds that were carried by the wind and waves. Eventually, birds nested on Surtsey. Today Surtsey has a number of plants and other organisms living on it.

Which sentence **best** concludes the paragraph?

- A. The number and types of island plants and animals is not expected to keep increasing.
- B. The ocean someday could rise to levels that would cause the island to disappear again.
- C. The island has nesting grounds for many species of sea birds, including puffins and gulls.
- D. This island is important because it has been a valuable tool for scientists studying plant and animal life.

- 11.** A student is writing an editorial for the local newspaper about cell phones in schools. Read the draft of the editorial and complete the task that follows.

Needing to Communicate

Many parents want to be able to have access to their children via cell phones during the school day. However, with the regulations that are present at most schools, contacting their children can seem impossible to parents. While it is true that cell phones can be used improperly in a classroom, this problem can be avoided by establishing a clear set of rules. Instead of banning cell phones completely in schools, school districts should impose limits. These limits would help ensure that mobile devices are used for the right circumstances. For example, students would not be able to use phones during classes. They would, however, be able to use phones during breaks, such as lunch, and after school. This limit would eliminate disruptive phone alerts during lessons but still enable appropriate use for students who are able to follow the rules and thus earn the privilege of carrying a phone.

Write an introduction to the editorial that establishes and introduces a clear claim that supports the use of cell phones in schools.

- 12.** A student is writing a school newspaper article about photic sneezers. Read the draft of the article and answer the question that follows.

Some people sneeze when they are hit with direct sunlight. We refer to these people as photic (light) sneezers. About one in every three people sneezes when exposed to strong light. Photic sneezes occur when nerves leading to the brain from the eye and nose become intertwined. When this happens, suddenly seeing bright light sends electrical signals to the brain that are mistaken as signals from the nose. The nose and eye nerves crossing fools the brain causing the nose to tickle, which, in turn, leads to the photic sneeze. There is some evidence that the photic sneeze reflex is something people are born with.

The student wants to replace the underlined words with ones that are more specific. Which **two** pairs of words would best replace the underlined words?

- A.** sturdy, natural
- B.** brilliant, genetic
- C.** tough, fortunate
- D.** harsh, traditional
- E.** intense, hereditary
- F.** dangerous, ancestral

- 13.** Choose the sentence that does **not** contain errors in grammar usage.
- A.** "Rufus, come, Rufus," I bellow to my dog as I chased him down the street.
 - B.** Mr. Smith comes out of his house and caught my dog before it ran into the street.
 - C.** "Thanks for your help," I shout across the street to Mr. Smith, who shrugs as if it was nothing.
 - D.** Once Rufus and I were safely home, I gave him a bowl of water, which he drank as if he were dehydrated.
- 14.** Choose the sentence that does **not** contain any errors in grammar usage or punctuation.
- A.** John brought a bagged lunch, but he did not have time to eat it.
 - B.** Every Friday, the cafeteria serves pizza to students on paper plates.
 - C.** I bought pizza, and it was eaten by me for lunch.
 - D.** Topped with hot fudge sauce, John could not believe I ate the entire sundae.

- 15.** A student is writing a research report for science class about how rainfall affects crop production. Read **Source 1** and the directions that follow.

Source 1: Missouri Corn Yield and Rainfall Comparison

Annual Corn Yields and Rainfall by County, 2011-2012				
County	Corn Yield (bushels per acre)		Rainfall (inches)	
	2011	2012	2011	2012
Atchison	149	106	34	23
Bollinger	105	107	68	37
Gasconade	82	64	45	38
Linn	116	51	30	29
New Madrid	171	159	74	32

The student found another source. Read **Source 2**. Choose **two** sentences that have information that conflicts with the information in **Source 1**.

Source 2: "Corn Crop Production for 2012" by Lorna Schulman

- A.** Overall, Missouri experienced a drier year in 2012 than in 2011, and it seems to have affected the corn crop.
- B.** Rainfall in all counties was lower in 2012 than in 2011.
- C.** In addition, every county in the state also had a lower corn yield in 2012 than in 2011.
- D.** Even though there was less rain in 2012, the largest corn yield for any county was in 2012.
- E.** If 2013 rainfall levels are similar to those of 2012, we can expect similar low corn yields.
- F.** Perhaps it would benefit the farmers in these counties to purchase an irrigation system in order to gain higher corn yields next season.

- 16.** A student is writing a research report about the Great Barrier Reef. Read both sources and the directions that follow.

Source 1: An official government pamphlet about the Great Barrier Reef

The Great Barrier Reef is made up of large, hard coral reefs that create a visible barrier. It is located between the coast of northern Australia and the Pacific Ocean. There are more types of coral in the Great Barrier Reef than anywhere else in the world. The reef is so big that it can be seen from satellites in outer space. It has become one of Australia's greatest tourist attractions. Visitors to the Great Barrier Reef spend about five billion dollars and create about 60,000 employment opportunities.

Source 2: A report by a marine biologist

Located off of the continent of Australia, the Great Barrier Reef connects to the Pacific Ocean. It is an area known as the Indo-Pacific Ocean. Approximately 1,250 miles long, the Great Barrier Reef is made of different species of coral. The wide variety and colors of fish and coral make it a favorite destination for visitors. Although coral can be found off the shores of many Caribbean islands, the coral in the Great Barrier Reef is stronger than other types of coral because it can heal itself when damaged by boats. Yet the Australian government has still created rules about swimming and fishing in the area to protect the coral.

The student took notes about information in the sources. Select **two** notes that correctly paraphrase, or restate, information from both sources.

- A.** When boats damage Australia's Great Barrier Reef, it hurts the tourism industry.
- B.** The Great Barrier Reef is home to many colorful fish and the greatest variety of coral.
- C.** The astonishing size of the Great Barrier Reef makes it preferable to the Caribbean shores.
- D.** There are types of fish and coral living in the Great Barrier Reef that cannot be found anywhere else.
- E.** Australia benefits from tourists' desire to explore the unique and hearty coral found in the Great Barrier Reef.
- F.** By creating swimming and fishing limitations in the Great Barrier Reef, the government is protecting many jobs.

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